

Learn More

the nimzo-indian

CHRIS WARD

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EVERYMAN CHESS

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To my Mom, of course!

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Contents

	Bibliography	6
	Introduction	7
1	Rubinstein Variation: 4 a3 b6	11
2	Rubinstein Variation: 4 a3 0-0	27
3	Rubinstein Variation: 4 a3 c5	45
4	Classical Variation: 4 Qc2 c6	57
5	Classical Variation: 4 Qc2 0-0 5 a3 5xc3+ 6 Qc2	69
6	Classical Variation: 4 Qc2 c5 5 dxc5	84
7	4 ND b6	100
8	4 ND 0-3	114
9	4 ND c5	125
10	Sämisch Variation: 4 a3	136
11	Leipzig Variation: 4 Bg5	152
12	Odds and Ends	164
	Solutions to Exercises	173

Introduction

1.d4 Nf6 2.e4 e5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 (Diagram 1)



Diagram 1
A quiet move

This is called by 4.e5. Commonly acknowledged as the Rubinstein Variation, White may appear to waste the advancing the centre pawns just one square, but advancing it to e4 (and possibly even to e5 later) certainly hasn't been ruled out. The c3 bishop is temporarily blocked as but its partner on f6 is ready to go.

This chapter focuses on the response 4...d4, which I expect tend to favour. Generally the plan is to blockade the bishop on b7 from where it pressures White's king-side as well as maintaining further control over the e4-square. Another option that Black has is to overtake the bishop to e4 from where it can attack White's e4-pawn. This may be particularly effective if White has doubled e-pawns and has difficulty defending the further forward of the two.



WARNING: The move ...d4 certainly doesn't rule out the participation of the black e- or d-pawns. However, regarding the latter Black should always watch out for Qd4+ which, if overlooked, could spell the end for a bishop on b4.

After 4...d4 it's like to consider two different main paths: 5 Bc3 and 5 Ng2.

White Plays 5 Bc3

1.d4 Nf6 2.e4 e5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 4.e5 5.Bc3 (Diagram 2)

This is considered more accurate than 5.Nc3 as White immediately gets to grips with the e4-square and thus, for example, prevents the immediate reply 5...Nc4.



Diagram 2
Strategy of **W**



Diagram 3
White must judge the black reply

3...Bb7

The most natural reaction and consistent with the last move. Regard my last warning, already not $3...d4$! $3...Qg4$ when Black drops a whole pawn.

4 Nf3

Still the most popular continuation. However, protecting the g4 pawn via $4...f3$ has been tried as has $4...Ng4$ - essentially offering the pawn as a sacrifice. Regarding the latter, $4...Rg4$! $4...Rf3$ leads to a very interesting position. Instead of repeating the pawns with $4...Rg4$! $4...Rf3$! $4...Rg4$! $4...Rf3$! $4...Rg4$! $4...Rf3$!, perhaps White should leave it as a gambit with $4...Qd3$!

5...Nc4

The best way to ensure that White doesn't withdraw his pawn here is to move a pawn on the key square f3. Further pressure is added to $d4$ and the black f pawns is now able to leave its top in the middle game.

7...Qd3

White defends his knight whilst simultaneously attacking Black's. This looks obvious although to reveal more White has devised a try (up to delete this move altogether by rendering the pawn sacrifice $7...Qd3$!) As it happens, that move order is the subject of our first illustrative game.

7...Bf8

Black stubbornly refuses to trade. Advancing the f pawns also introduces other options for Black. For example, after casting the rook "average" $...Rf8$ -like $g8$ could be a good attacking weapon.

TIP: If Black has it in mind to play $...Bc2$, resulting in White obtaining two c-pawns, then he may prefer $...f7-f6$ over $...d7-d8$ to control the $d4$ -square. The latter would enable White to easily untangle his



plans. Yes, a timely castl and c3-c4 would also see White emerging with more active plans.

8-6-8 Black

White's last move captured his knight, and thus prevented an equal. Hence the lone bad move to put with the bishop. The alternative is. Had 8-6-8 Bc7 would have allowed White to gain the initiative with 10 e4.

8-6-8 Diagram 4

Plans

Natural developing ideas for Black include ...d7-d6 and ...Nbd7 with the knight on a good track that doesn't obstruct the bishop. One possibility is to try to run for ...e4-e5 while a kingside attack, possibly involving the previously mentioned ...Bf3 exchange, is certainly not outrageous. This is particularly the case if White moves his c3 knight allowing the aggression. Qxd4 for amazing compensation that White should avoid is 10 Nd2 Qd4 11 g3? Nge4 12 gxe4?? Nd5 mate, but he can't be criticised for retreating his knight. A priority should be to bridge the e4 knight with d3-d4 and if he can ever arrange d3-e4 then all the better. Another plan that he may look out for is the opportunity to play e4-e5 in order to undermine his pawns.

NOTE: Unless it nets a pawn, it is rarely a good idea for White to trade his bishop for the knight on e4 as both ...Bd4, dominating the light squares, and ...Bac4, opening up the f-file, are attractive options.



White Plays 5 Nge2

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e3 b6 5 Nge2 (Diagram 4)



Diagram 4

A replacement is at hand!

With his last move White offers some extra support to the e4-knight.

so that he is no longer troubled by the threat of doubled pawns. An ideal scenario for White is to have Black play ...Bxc3 so that he can just recapture with his knight. Following simple development, the 'two bishops' advantage can be claimed with no pawn structure flaws.



NOTE: When the advantage of the 'two bishops' is referred to, the implication is that one side has a pair of bishops whilst the opponent may instead have one and a knight or perhaps two knights. If you have a bishop pair then it is rare that they are both bad and they can be positively awesome in an open position.

QUESTION 1: What is an 'open' position?

1...Nc4

A very principled move as Black maintains the pressure on the e3-knight. After ...c3 the threat of pawn doubling is still there. The same is not true after 1...Bc7 and then 2...d4 is best met with 2...Bc7. Nevertheless, as no pawns have been created on E, the open advantage after 1...d4 2...d4 is borne White with the upper hand despite his slightly deficient development.

Another idea which is sometimes employed here (as well as in similar positions) is 2...Bc3. Then a valid concept is that after 2...d4 Bxc3+ 3...Nxc3 4...Bc3 Black could hope to exchange light squared bishops (top of) immediately leaving himself with a knight against a bad bishop.



NOTE: The colour of the squares of a side's fixed pawns determines whether a bishop is 'good' or 'bad'. To work in harmony it is preferable that the pawns control one set of coloured squares whilst the bishop controls the other. A bishop is defined as 'bad' if its pawns are blocked on the same colour.

As it would be undesirable for White to be left with only a dark-squared bishop when he has pawns on dark squares, he shouldn't play b4 and 2...Bc3 would presumably retain some tension in the position.

2...Qc2

Perfectly playable instead is 2...Bc3, after 3...Nc4 4...Qc2 5...d4 6...d4 7...Bc3 White would have a space advantage but either waywardly it would be Black who has the bishop pair.

TIP: With a white knight on e3 rather than f3, both sides should consider...Qc2 as a move.



With reference to the stone top, after 2...d4? Qc2? 3...g3 Qc2 the forced 3...Nc4 leaves White positionally all over the place.

2...Bc7 3...d4 Bxc3 4...Nxc3 5...Nxc3 6...Qc2 7...d4 (Diagram 1)

White has achieved his aim of obtaining the bishop pair without doing away his pawn structure, although now he is lagging behind in development.



Diagram 1
No doubled pawns

Plans

White must proceed very carefully in trying to get his bishops out. For example, it would be very easy to suggest 13 O-O (blocking the $h7\text{-g8}$ diagonal) with 14 Bc2 and 15 O-O to follow, but there is a flaw: Black has 13...Qb4! 14 g3 Qd4! forcing White's f-pawns twice. Upon 15 e4 , very awkward is 15...B5 .

With that in mind, White might prefer developing his other bishop as 13 h4 first, via 13 h4 or 13 h5 . If he neither questions these aside from the obvious 13...B5 and what plan, he could certainly consider offering the $g3$ pawns as a sacrifice.

On Black's part, developing the knight on $d7$ after $...d7-d8$, from where it could transfer to $f8$ after the typical $...d7$ $f8$ push, looks reasonable. The side of the board on which the white king gets to rest should influence Black's thoughts on which side of the board to set a contest for efforts.

Illustrative Games

Game 1

□ White ■ Black
Carlson-Morley 1984

$1\text{ d4 Nf6 } 2\text{ c4 e6 } 3\text{ Nc3 Bb4 } 4\text{ e3 Bb7 } 5\text{ Bc2 Bb7 } 6\text{ Nf3 Nc6 } 7\text{ f4-d4 B}$
Black chooses to keep the $e3$ square isolated rather than accepting White's offered pawn.

8 d5

TIP: This game push is a reasonable plan for White in the Sicilian when a black bishop is fianchettoed on the queenside. As well as working out this plan from the outset, White presumes the $e3$



and f3-pawns. Furthermore, a white knight now has the attractive d4-square available.

8...Bac5

With White again threatening to win a pawn on e4, it was beyond time for Black.

9 Bead Naf

After, say, 9...cxd4 10-cxd4 Nac5 11 Qd2 Nbd5 12 Bc3! White has good play for his sacrificed pawn, with his dark-squared bishop ready to take up an active post along the b3-g7 diagonal. The drawback of White's 8th move is that it conceded the d4-square. This was worth the loss for a black knight and as for the immediate 8...Nc3, may be more accurate.

10 Nd4 Nbd5 11 Bc3!!

The retreat is the true-wasting, a more dynamic plan being to try to get on the break e3-e4 a little quicker.

11...Bc4 12 Qf3 Qf6 13 Bcd2 g4 14 exd4 15 Ncd3 Bf4 (Diagram 6)



Diagram 6
A delight for knights!



Diagram 7
The g-file is where it's at!



WARNING: White must be very sure about his chances before allowing Black to block up the position in this manner, as this type of pawn structure is more favourable for knights.

16 Qf4 g4



TIP: Often it is best to concentrate your efforts on the side of the board in which your fixed pawns lie.

17 Bc4 Bf7

With the attacking break ...g4-g5-g6 imminent (the fixed pawns on e4 and f2 lean towards the kingside), Black starts to rally his troops. The g-file is going to be all important.

18 Qf3 d6 19 g3 Bc5 20 gxf4

If White tried to block things up with $20.g4$ then Black would turn to the pawn break. At 18 , with his major pieces likely to invade along the h file instead.

20...g4 21 Bg2+ Kd8 22 Qf3 Kd7 23 Bg3 Nf7

The game is very appealing but Black hasn't forgotten that when doubled, the $e4$ pawn is a natural target too. Black has plenty of time and sets about maximizing the use of his knights.

24 a4

Frantically, White offers a pawn in order to try and increase the scope of his bishop pair.

24...Naxd3 25 e4 Nf7 26 Baxd3 (Diagram 3)

White would have preferred to have doubled rooks on the open g file but, due to the advanced Black f pawn, $g2$ is the only safe square available for use.

26...Nf5

The start of an excellent plan.

27 Nc3 Nf6 28 Nd3 Bg7 29 Bg2 Bf7

Had Black resisted a rook to the g file on move 26 then White could have solved some problems by trading off both sets of rooks.

TIP: When you have a space advantage, you should try to avoid $g4$ sweeps.

30 Bc1 Nf4

The knight has covered a lot of distance but has found a perfect square.

31 Bg7 Bg7 (Diagram 4)



Diagram 3
An interesting variation

32 Bf1

Black's superior control of the $g2$ -square rendered $32 Bg1$ unplayable.

12...Ng2- 13 Bg2 Kg2!

Either side let her looking go. White now opts to part company with her queen. The battle is lost.

14 Qxh4 Qxh4 15 Kxg2 Qg3- 16 Kh2 Qh4 17 Rg2 Nf6 18 Nf2 Nf7
19 Nf3 Ng2 20 Ng2 Qg4 White resigns

Game 2

□ Intro ■ Puzzle

Move 10!

1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 e5 3 e4 exd4 4 Nc3 Bc4 5 c3 Nc6 6 Qc2 Bb7 7 Bdd3 Bf8 8 Bc4 Bxc3 9 e3 d5 10 Nc1

Preferred here to 10 Nf2 with White instead choosing to chase away the annoying knight without allowing the trading option.

11...e4 (Diagram 8)



Diagram 8

White plans to Bf3-pawn-pull



Diagram 9

Pressure on e4 and f6



NOTE: Although early on ...d7-e6 and ...d7-e6 are often seen independently, in the long run they can easily be played (as here) in tandem. One drawback to the slight recasting of the f6-pawn that may also encourage an e4-e5 (square-to-promoting) plan.

11 f3 Ng2

As there is no necessity to advance the d7-pawn (the f6 knight can develop to e6), an alternative and playable retreat here would have been 11...Nf8.

12 e4 (Diagram 9)

A crucial feature in this game is that Black is never able to seal things up completely. Here 12...e4 is playable because of the hanging f3-pawn. For the same reason, 12...g4! does it with a pawn.

TIP: When in possession of the 'bishop pair', White should always be on the lookout for ways to open up the position.



12. Qh3 Bc4 Bb4 e6

Commonly played before Black can get his own knight to the square

14. Qg4

Instead 14...Qg4 15. Nd2 16. Bb7+ Bb4 17. Bc4, leaving the f4-pawn as an easy target, would be very favorable for White

14. Bc4 e6 Bb4 e6

Black has come up with an interesting plan to close the position to suit his knight but White proves equally cunning at opening things up

NOTE: Supported passed pawns are typically powerful in the end-game but in the middlegame they can often get in the way

15. Nf3 Nc4

If Black didn't take this move, then even White would maintain a knight in the square

16. Bc4 Qc6 18. Bc4?

Very dynamic. White acts quickly before Black has the opportunity to complete his development

18...e6 19. e4 Qc4 Bc4 e4 (Diagram 11)

Diagram 11
Nice point!



Diagram 12
Evolve into

The connected passed pawns are menacing and they do a good job of keeping Black's queenside pieces out of the action

20... Nc4 Bc4 Bc4 Nc4 22. Qc4 Bc4 23. Qc4 Bc4 24

Despite what may have sounded like biased comments from me, Black is of course rewarded by having an extra pawn. Though eager to break up White's pawns, he returns the material too soon. Correct was 24...Qg4

25. e3 Bc4?

And now 25...Bc7 would have been more prudent

20...a6!?!- Both 27 Qd1 28f7! 29 Ra6 Qg8 30 Qd4 (Diagram 13)
 Utilizing the track 29...Qd4 30 Bf6! to escape the pin.

20...b6 20 Nbd2 Qd8 21 b4 Ra6 22 Bf1 Bb7 23 Qd4 Ra6 24 Nc7
 Qd4 25 Qc4- Bb7 26 Nc7 Qd4- 27 Qd4 cxd4 28 Bxd4 Bb7 29
 b5 b6 30 a4 Bxd4 31 a5 Bc3 32 Nc7 Ra6 33 Na8- Bg7
 34 Na6 Na8 35 Bc7 Black resigns

Game 3

□ Sicilian ■ King

Maxim-Alexander Open, Potkin 1994

1 d4 Nf6 2 e4 e5 3 Nc3 Bc4 4 c3 b5 5 Ng5 Nc4 6 B3 Na6 7
 Nxc7! (Diagram 13)



Diagram 13

King to e1!- Qf6+



Diagram 14

Mating or support e4-e4

As White is destined to obtain doubled e-pawns anytime, he may as well gain a tempo on the bishop, and after 7 bxc7 Bc7 8 Ng5 he can at least start harassing a big pawn centre.

NOTE: An opponent is more likely to move cramped by advancing centre pawns, the more pieces there are in contention. This is because he will have less space in which to house them all and mis-measure them around.

7...Bxc7 8 bxc7 Nc4

Although .c7-d8 and .Nc7 are generally acceptable development options, here Black has already decided on a target for the knight 8 Bb5 Qb6!

TIP: Always look out for checks. This queen check in particular is menacing for threatening a sacrifice into White's neck as it provides a weakening of the white king-side.

18 g3 Qb6

A real thorn, the black queen prevents White from casting king-side



and therefore to avoid ...g2!

11...Qc7

Yes, it is the danger on c4 that has been singled out for attention.

12 Bc2 Bc6 13 Nc3 (Diagram 14)

Introducing a new dimension. Although Black would like to win the c4 pawn, the square also makes nearby play

14...Rc8

After 14...cxd4 15 Qxd4... White does it no more than a check on e4 but the backward e4-pawn would be in for a hard time.

14...Nc6

Black is angling for the outpost on c4 and the knight is just the piece that wants to occupy it.

15 c5 Bc6 16 Bc4 Nc4 17 Bc3 (Diagram 15)



Diagram 14
Pony play!



Diagram 15
Black dominates



NOTE: Diagram 14 is a very good example of a very "bad" strategy!

17...Qd8

Protecting White by not even allowing the pawn break 18...e4

18 Bb3 b2

Black has a long term plan in mind but in the meantime is more to relax light squared domination.

19 Bc4 Qc7 20 Qc2 Bb7

One option that Black has is to open the h-file with ...h5 when his rooks are ready to inflict some damage.

21 e4 Bc3 22 b4 (Diagram 16)

An absolutely terrible move for White to have to make. Nevertheless, it is necessary in order to prevent Black a rook from entering his position down the h-file.

22...Kd4 23 Qc1 Kc4 24 Kg1 Kc4

Black's chosen plan is far from his only one. White's major pawns are pretty paralyzed and winning would be 24...Bg2 25 Kc1 Kd4 26 f4 Kd4 27 d4 Kd4 28 Bc1. The bishop has just about made it in time to defend the g1 pawn but due to pins Black can capture on either b4 or f4.

23-c1

NOTE: This game is a good example of why White doesn't always solve his queen-side pawn structure problems by achieving c4-c5. Although he may exchange off a doubled pawn, the a-pawn remains isolated and, after ...a6, Black's rooks would have an obvious target.

24...a6! 25 Kc1

Ironically it is the one pawn set on a dark square that is about to reduce Black's attraction. As all of White's other pawns are otherwise engaged in defensive duties, it's a case of all hands to the pump!

25...Kd4 27 Kd4

Unfortunately from White's point of view, his pawns are perfectly placed for a neat tactic.

27...Kc4! 28 Kc4 Qc3! White resigns

Game 4

□ Forward ■ West

From League 2001

1 d4 Nf6 2 e4 e5 3 Nc3 Bc4 4 c3 b5 5 Ng5 Nc6 6 Qc2 7 a4 8 Bc1 9 Nc4 10 Nc3 11 Qc3 Qc7 (Diagram 17)



Diagram 17
White has the "totem-pole"



Diagram 18
Black is okay

I was playing Black in this game and Dr. QPTM was whisked out after much thought. That over-the-board inspiration is not quite a novelty

Starting Out: The King-Side

but the move is certainly very rare.

10 h3

The great behind 9–g9 is that I intended attacking the g7 pawns after 10 h3, while upon 10 f3 the standard treatment of ... Qg7+ a2f2 looks promising. After the game my opponent was baffled as to where he had gone wrong or at least how he might have played more actively. One idea is the more adventurous 10 h4 although there White will be naturally wary of castling long.

11... d6 11 f3 f4 12 Qc2 Qd6

Freeing up the black f-pawn and landing in on White's c-pawn, so as to prevent 13 f3.

13 f3 13... Nc7 14 Bb3 B5

A standard continuation. Having exposed his e-pawn, White was no doubt eager to play 13 e4. The text, of course, puts a stop to that and makes the f3-square a comfortable option for the knight.

15 B3 Bxg3

Obviously not sure 15... Qc4?? as 16 Bc1 somewhat emboldens the black queen.

16 Bc1 Qf7 17 Bc3 e5 (Diagram 16) 18 e4?

Played because White couldn't find an alternative plan. The problem is that this is detrimental and I'd be surprised if White is really worse after say 18 f4 or maybe 18 h5, angling for 18 g4. That said, I was more than happy with my position anyway.

19... Bc4 20 f4 e4 Qg7

The white e-pawn becomes a natural target.

21 Bf3 Nf5-f4 Bf4 e4 22 e5

NOTE: The black bishop is clearly not well placed when fianchettoed against a pawn like this. However it can often re-enter the game via e4.

22... f3 23 Bc2

My thoughts were that it was necessary here for White to play 23 h2 in order to prevent Black's next move. I know that this crosses after h4e4 and the f3-bishop is a bad one, but without it White has serious problems holding his position together.

23... f4?

Now White has the unpleasant choice of taking or allowing a new target (a pawn) to be created on f3.

24 Bg2 Qg4 25 Bg1 B7?

With the queens off then White might be able to give Black some thing to think about by advancing his queen-side pawns. As it stands though, he can't afford to open up his king position.

26 Bc3 Bc7 27 Bc4 Bc3 28 Qc2 Qg4



As previously remarked, there is no reason for Black to be interested in a queen trade. Black dominates the f-file and keeps an eye on the e-pawn. Meanwhile, of course, Bb1, Nf3 is a threat.

27 g3 Nf3 (Diagram 24)



Diagram 24

The e4 pawn is a target

28 Bc1?

An error to lose trouble. I was expecting 28 h3 when with 28... h4 I figured I had an excellent available plan in ...Nf3-g4. Observe that there is an opportunity for White to place a rook on the f-file because of a ...Nf3 tactic similar to one in the game.

28...Naxd1 29 Qaxd1 Qaxd1 30 Raxf1 Raxf1 31 Rxf1 Rxf1 32 Raxf1 Rxf1+

The unfortunately placed bishop was always the target.

33 Bc1 Bxg1 34 Bc2 Bf1 37 h4 axh4 38 axh4 Bb1

Simple chess. Black rook off the white king.

34 c5 bxc5 45 bxc5 Bxc5 45 Rxf1 Bxf1 46 cxd4 cxd4 46 Bb1 Bc1 White resigns

Played in preference to 45... Bc2+. As the white king is now being castigned to a restricted geographic area, there is no hope of playing on.

Game 3

□ Paul Pascoe ■ Agostino Garro

Spain Championship, Barcelona 2000

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 a3 b5 5 Ng5! Bxd4 6 Nxd4 (Diagram 25)

As previously stated, another Garro suggests that White can obtain a slight edge via the complex 8 a5. With the text White encourages castling.

6...Raxd4 7 bxc3 48 8 Bc2

Starting Out: The White Initiative

Despite having several pawns on dark squares, White finds a useful pass for this bishop. He ignores the current situation on c4 but prevents Black from casting.



Diagram 20
White's initiative



Diagram 21
Black castles

8...d4!

This move looks a little too greedy to me. Of course after 8...d4 White can reply too passively with 10-Qc2, but after 10...c4! 11-Qc4 Qc7 Black has probably achieved equality. Being unable to castle short will not be made of a hindrance with the queen off.

9 Be2

Counting on long-term compensation and hence choosing not to cast!

9...Rc7 10-f4-f5 10...Rc4 11 Bc2 ad

Because of the passed d4 pawn, White now has 10 Bc2 Bc7 10 Kc1! 10 Kc2! but opts to take an alternative route.

11 Bc2 Nd8 12 Qc2! (Diagram 21) 12...c4!

Okay! Black had to suffer a little but this is really too much to bear! Now he lacks of dark-squared control in downtown!

TIP: Be very careful about putting too many pawns on the same colour as your remaining bishop.

13 Nc3 Qc7 14 Nd4! Bc8 15-c4 Nd4 17 Bb4 g5

Preventing 16 Nc7! but now another dark square like On d4.

18 Qc2! Bc7 19 Qc3! Black resigns.

An accurate finish by White leaves Black with an attacked rook and an unpleasantly damaged-king to boot. He does, however, still have his extra pawn!



Chapter Two

The Rubinstein Variation

4 e3 0-0

- Introduction
- White Plays 5 Nge2
- White Plays 5 Bd3
- White Plays 5 Nf3
- Illustrative Games



Introduction

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 Bb7 (Diagram 1)



Diagram 1
A typical move

After 4.e3 the reply 4...d5 is fairly non-committal. Black's logic is simple: he 'knows' that he is going to play that move anyway, so why not get it out the way now? How he follows up will depend upon the game features that White adopts. I am going to devote this chapter (see 5.Ng2, 5.Bd3 and 5.Nd2). Certainly each option has distinguishing features but regarding the next chapter on, there is always a chance of a transposition.

White Plays 5.Ng2

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 Bb7 5.Ng2



Diagram 2
The d5-square is locked in



Diagram 3
The d5-square is followed

Just as in the last chapter, the white knight supports the rook(s) to ensure that he doesn't end up with doubled pawns.

4...d4 (Diagram 4)

Black stakes his claim in the center. He now has every intention of preserving his dark-squared bishop.



NOTE: Black should never reject this move purely on the grounds that it might transpose into a "Queen's Gambit Declined" (1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6) as inevitably there are fundamental differences. In Diagram 2, for example, White finds his dark-squared bishop tucked inside the pawn chain. In a QGD he would have most likely deployed from g4 or f4 before playing e4-d4.

4 e3 Re7 5 Nf3

Despite my initial description of Nf3, you shouldn't write this move off as merely defending e4 as it has other options too. Although it is equally the most natural start, in fact both the f4 and g4 squares have their moments. On f4 the knight prevents the d4-pawn and if Black takes on e4 then White will most certainly see to play e3-e4. 7...e6

Black adopts a solid formation and bolsters the d4-pawn.

4 Bf1 (Diagram 5)

Plans

If White could arrange the d4 break then things would look very hot, because of the lack of support for the d4-pawn, that means volatility. A "maintaining" plan would be to put f4-e3 in good use and to guard up the queenside, with h2-h4 being an obvious candidate. Meanwhile Black needs to figure out how to activate his light-squared bishop. At some stage he may need to recede... d4-d5 but be ready to trade with... c4-c3 or... c3-c4.



TIP: A plan is itself which many Grandmasters adopt is to frustrate the opponent by limiting his activity. Frequently under the strain, victims will crack and cash out with steady repercussions.

White Plays 5 Bc3

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Bc3 Bb4 4 e3 0-0 5 Bf1 d5 (Diagram 6)

As this chapter's selection of practical games shows clearly doesn't state, White now has a few options here: 3 Nc3 will transpose to the most essential line but aside from the last before, also not uncommon are 3 e3 and 3 Nf3. Black, when either 7...d5 or 7...e5 should follow. Regarding the latter observe that 3 d4-d5? Qxd4+ 4 Kxd1 Nf4 wouldn't be advisable for White.

5...c4d4 6...c3

Maximizing control of the e4-square and freeing the c4-bishop. After

See reference 6. Next, now White easily solves the problem of his attacked knight (by with 7 Ng4) he can look forward to playing e4-e5.



Diagram 4
e4 or e5? That is the question!



Diagram 5
Attacking the centre

7 Ng4 Bx4

Black has at his disposal a half-open e file and he should use it.

8 e4 Bx4

This may seem like an odd remark, especially when the queen-side pawns are still at home. However, Black may want to play ...c7-c6 and he doesn't want the important game caught offside. Furthermore, an d4-bishop is very active and it makes White think about his b2-pawn.

9 B1

When his dark squared bishop retreats of his pawn, then White could consider a strong plan of queen-side expansion. As things stand, though, the objective is to get an e4-e5 and, if allowed, e4-e5.

9...e4 (Diagram 6)

Plans

Now that White has weakened his b2-pawn, Black is not too worried about his d5-pawn becoming isolated. His last move pressures the centre and, although standing d4 is sensible, the possibility is always there to play ...c7-c6 and create a strong queen-side with ...b7-b6 etc. As for White, arranging e4 and e5 will be difficult but in the interim a manoeuvre of Qf1-h3, with some chances for a kingside attack, should be a consideration.

White Plays 5 Nf3

1 d4 Nf6 2 e4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e5 d5 5 Nf3 Bb7 6 B1 7 Bx4

There is nothing amazing in White's last two moves and, along with Black's next move, they could all have come in a different order:

6...d7 f3-f4 (Diagram 6)



Diagram 6

Castles, declined



Diagram 7

The instant Nf3 (highlighted)

A pretty pattern has formed in the centre and Black's last move informed White that the second player is certainly going to have a say about the typically key area of the board. He must now decide whether to retain the tension in the middle of the board or saddle his opponent with an isolated pawn. Whilst the main motivation behind is the most popular, there is in fact no obligation here for Black to clarify the situation. Indeed, 7...Jd7, 7...Nc7 and 7...Nc6 have all been seen in practical play.

7...cxd4 f3xd4

NOTE: In order to gain a tempo, Black has effectively waited until White's light-squared bishop has moved before taking on d4.

8 f4! (Diagram 7)

Black could have created the order of his f3 and f4 moves but the outcome would have been the same.

Plans

The isolated queen's pawn position shown in Diagram 7 could be reached via a number of different sequences that at first seem a mile-lon miles away from the Moscow-Indian (e.g. via the Caro-Kann, 1 e4 c5 2 d4 d5 3 cxd5 cxd4 4 Nf3 f5 5 Nc3 Bb4 7 Bc2 dxc3 8 Bxc2 9-d3 10-f4).

Whole books have been written on just this scenario but I will at least try to summarise the plans available. First up, the d4 pawn is isolated and hence potentially weak. In the long run Black may consider plans counter-attacking his former to attack it, although at present that isn't



easy and White has plenty of alternatives available. The main point that we traded off the weaker Gas gave a will become and, as is typical with a space advantage, White should try to avoid further gains.

TIP: When facing an isolated pawn, one can't go wrong by occupying the square directly in front of it with a piece.

Repeating the above tip, any black piece would ultimately look good on e5. Typically Black will fianchetto his bishop on f7 (via either

h7-g8 or ...c7-d8 and ...f7-g8) and a maximum of a knight to f6 is very reasonable. Black can retreat his bishop to e7 where it may help to open the H-file (in the event of f6) or the c-file (in the latter event the d-pawn would no longer be isolated but instead the new c-pawn could be a target).

White players tend to look upon the isolated d-pawn as a strength rather than a weakness. Indeed, its isolating features include the control of the key e-square and thus the prevention of the freeing pawn break ...d4-d5. A kingside attacking plan is to be encouraged, with a queen and bishop alignment against h7's rook as convenient and a weak 'average' along the 3rd rank also possible. Although White will often utilize the d5 square, he should also be on the look out to achieve the d4-d5 break should Black let his guard down or if the opening tactics favour him.

Illustrative Games

Game 1

□ Spain ■ Pasarnik
Borzhoma 2011

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. e3 0-0 5. Bb5 d7f1 (Diagram 8)



Diagram 8
A little quieter



Diagram 9
Black is forced back

Not very inspirational, White is granted a hassle-free space advance

ings on the game and he seriously makes the most of it.

4 Nge2 b6 7 f4-d4



WARNING! When Black plays moves such as ...d7-d6 and ...d7-d6 he must be sure to check his bishop for the knight or at least take real care that it won't be trapped.

7...Bac3

White was threatening to move the knight and then re-attack the bishop with a3-a4 and b3-b4.

8 Nac3 Bb7 9 e4 e5 10-d6

Everything is going smoothly for White. He has the bishop pair well out, having had to compromise his pawn structure, and his attractive advanced pawns make Black's remaining bishop look odd.

10... Nbd7 11 Bcd Ncb 12 Bcd e4 13 ad Bcd 14 f5 Bcd 15 bc (Dingyev 0)

White continues to expand on the queenside, towards which his last pawns (a3-e4 and d5) lean.

16...Nb7 17 Qd4 Qd7 17 Bb1 Bc7 18 Bcd Bcb 19 Bcb1 bc 20 Ncd

QUESTION: Is Chechkin's White here played 19 bc here?

19...adB4 20 axb4 Ncd 21 Ncd Bcb 22 Bf1



NOTE: A feature of being cramped is the lack of communication that a player's pieces have between the kingside and queenside.

The black knight would take ages to reach white and the rooks are pretty much tied to the e file. Hence White switches attention to the kingside and prepares the pawn break f4-f5.

23...g5 24 Qd4

White denies Black's last move as a significant weakness and turns back to the queenside.

24...Bf 25 Bc1 Qd4 26 Bf2f

Feeling safe on horses, the white king starts to wander. He might be interrupting the engine although the idea of b3-b4 has some thing to be said for it too.

26... Kg7 27 Kcd Qd4 28 Kcd Bcb 29 Bcd Bc7 30 Bb1

The grandmaster spends a lot of his time trying with his opponent – he is clearly enjoying himself! With reference to the space advantage situation again, in contrast to his opponent, observe how long it would take Black's major pawns to get over to the kingside.

31... Bcd Bb1 32 Qd7 33 Bcd Qd4 34 Qd4 Bcd 35 g5 Bcd 36 Bf 37 Bf 38 Bcd 39 Ng7 39 Kcd Bcd 40 Bcd 41 Bcd 42 Bcd 43 Bcd 44 Bcd 45 Bcd 46 Bcd 47 Bcd 48 Bcd 49 Bcd 50 Bcd

After all that, it is White who has emerged in possession of the only open file!

41... Bcd 42 Bcd



TIP: As well as open files, rooks love the seventh-rank.

48... Kc7 49 Rd1 Bc6 50 g4 Bc7 51 Rd2

White effectively seals off the kingside, confident that he can make the necessary progress on the other side of the board.

49... Nd7 50 Kc2 Kc6 51 Bc2 Bc7 52 Bc3 Bc7 53 Kc4 Bc6 54 Rd3 Bc7 (Diagram 10)



Diagram 10

Black is in the open!



TIP: The king in a very unsafe place in the middlegame.

55...c6

Black is struggling for air and one brilliant winning variation is 55... Nd7 56 Nc2 Nd7 57 c3. 58d3 Bc6? cxd3 59 Nc3+ Bc6+ 60 Kc4! with the black knight in desperate trouble! 61 Bc3? b2 62 Bc3 Nc4 63 Bc4 64 Bc7 65 Kc7.

61 Nc4 Bc7 62 Bc3? Nc6! 63 Kc4! cxd4 64 Nc7+ Bc6 65 Nc6+ Kc6 66 Nc5 Nc4 67 Nc4 Nc7 68 Nc5 Nc6 69 Nc6 Nc7 70 Bc3 Nc7 71 Bc4 Bc7 72 Kc7 Nc6 73 Bc4 Nc7 74 Nc6+ Bc7 75 Bc4 Nc6!

Finally a black knight does something, but it is not enough.

66 g4! g4 67 c6 g5 68 c6 Black resigns

Game 7

□ Game ■ Answer

KeepsChess Grand Prix 2000

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e3 f5 5 Bc2 d6 6 e4

An alternative to 6 Nf3, 6 Ng2 and 6 c5!!

6... Bc5+ 7 f3! dxc4 8 Bc4! c6 (Diagram 11)

This game is unbalanced but, although gaining some dark-squared control, 8 dxc4? would leave some seriously weak squares on

Indeed, all three would then be isolated and our would most likely arise fall after ... Qd5.



Diagram 11

The black queen can go to e5



Diagram 12

Black has a queen-side pawn majority



TIP Black need not have the c5-square protected when playing ... e5 as this is frequently unobtainable.

8 Nf3 Qd5

Theory suggests that forcing White's bishop to d3 is worthwhile as then Black will never see a materialising ... e5 (after a typical e4-e5 push).

10 Bb2 Qc7?

Also playable is 10...Nc1 (5-0-0), but here Black opts to retreat her queen first.

10 Bb2 b4

As an alternative to a piece of ... Nd1 and ... e5-e4, Black provides up them for her light-squared bishop.

12 ... e4

The big debate in this kind of game is whether White's extra centre pawns offers her a middlegame plus or whether Black's queenside majority will prove decisive in the endgame. In retrospect, however, White could have opted for 11 Qd2 (instead of as previously ... Bb2), but few were aware would play for 12 ... e4.

12...Bd4

Thematic. Black seeks to exchange off one of the powerful white bishop duo.



NOTE: A bishop-for-knight advantage isn't usually as good as a two bishops vs. bishop and knight advantage.

13 Bxh4 Nxd4 14 Qd2 Qd7?

This seemingly obvious to see the e4-knight is protected and the

Starting Out: The White Indian

e7 square wanted for his future position. However, in addition, the e4 pawn is attacked with no other white piece available to come to its defense.

15. e5

Although this hits the f4 square, usually White only really wants to play this move if he can make use of either the e4 square or the h1-h7 diagonal. There is no white knight ready to take up the central post and of course his light squared bishop has already been swapped off.

15... Nc4 (Diagram 12)

The d4-square looks like the central post for a knight, but Black has earmarked his other knight for that.

16. e4 Bc4 17. Bc1 cxd4 18. cxd4 Nc6 19. Bc3 b5!

Another useful game move. Sure, Black usefully prevents any back rank rook moves, but also Ng4 is stopped. This means that White has no real chances for a kingside attack and no obvious active future for his knight. Rather than being a strength, the extra d4 pawn is now more of a liability.

20. Rb1

As far as I can make out, the rest of the game was a little depressing for White. For that reason, below Black goes to his central knight: Black side, I may have been tempted by Bc4?? Bc6 21. Rb2 and 22. Nd4 when it's probably best to say that at least White has some play for his pawns. That aside, it's almost it's really difficult to say where White goes wrong in this game (but I'll say more). However, when Steve Gullis was doing grandmaster it must be added that his opponent, Michael Adams is someone that I am always impressed with, the current world number four's handling of the Nimzo-Indian and his games were a joy to watch.

20... Nc7 21. Bc4 Bc6 22. g3 Rb4

The time when the extra queenside pawn will tell seems near.

NOTE: The term 'queenside pawn majority' means an 8 square, 1x8 facing an 8 square queenside pawn. This could involve a 3 vs 2 pawn or a 2 vs 1 pawn scenario and it's generally a good thing to have in an endgame where the kings are on the kingside. However, if both kings started on the queenside then it would be preferable to have a 'kingside pawn majority'. Sure, it is useful to have the ability to create a passed pawn to deflect the enemy monarch but one should still remember to take each position on its merits.

WARNING: Beware of generalizations, except this one of course!

23. Qd3 Rb4 24. Rb1 b4 (Diagram 13)

Another possible alternative is of course 24... Bc3.

25. Rb1 e3 26. Qd1 b3 27. axb3 Qxb3 28. Qe1

29.0! White struggles for any action and it is Black that is hitting the screw.





Diagram 13
The knight has a lovely outpost



Diagram 14
Black's treatment

16...Qc4 17 Kc1 Bb4 18 Qc1 Kc7 19 Kd1 Bc3

Black has grand plans for his passed a pawn.

20 Bc3 Qc7 21 Nd1 Kc7 22 Qc4 Bc3 23 Bc3 Bb4 24 Qc4 Qc4

Incredible maneuvering that makes Adams such a good player to watch. Now Black's rook is on an open file whilst his queen supports the pawn push and is on a juicy diagonal.

27 Bc3 Nc3-? (Diagram 14)

And out of the blue a decision how to attack.

28 Bc3 Bb3+ White resigns

In case you were wondering, with ...Qc4 next on the agenda, mate is forced in five moves!

Game 2

□ New ■ Game History

Color-Changing: Last Time: 2001

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e5 3 Nc3 Bc5 4 e3 f5 5 Bc3 d5 6 Ng5 (Diagram 13) 6...e4 7 e4d5 mate

7...mate 8.e4d5 White is a different way to play that leads to the 'Tactical Queen's Pawn' middlegame with the Knight on e4 rather than c3.

3 e3 Bc3

Current theory assumes 8...mate 8.e4d5 (or 8.e4 Bc3+ (Q)h4) 9...d4d5 10 Nc3 Nc3 an equal.

8 Bc3 b4

This is a typical way for Black to play. He wants to eliminate White's halcyon pawn advantage by trading his 'bad' bishop for White's 'good' one.



Diagram 16
Frustrating!



Diagram 17
The white knight gets up to it

16-6

A successful black strategy is illustrated well with 16...Rc6! 17 Qd4 18 Rd1 19 Ng5 20 Qc4 21 Qc4! 22 Nd1 23 Qd2 24 Qd2! 25 Rf1 26 Rf1! 27 Rf1! 28 Qd2 29 Qd2! 30 Qd2! 31 Qd2! 32 Qd2! 33 Qd2! 34 Qd2! 35 Qd2! 36 Qd2! 37 Qd2! 38 Qd2! 39 Qd2! 40 Qd2! 41 Qd2! 42 Qd2! 43 Qd2! 44 Qd2! 45 Qd2! 46 Qd2! 47 Qd2! 48 Qd2! 49 Qd2! 50 Qd2! 51 Qd2! 52 Qd2! 53 Qd2! 54 Qd2! 55 Qd2! 56 Qd2! 57 Qd2! 58 Qd2! 59 Qd2! 60 Qd2! 61 Qd2! 62 Qd2! 63 Qd2! 64 Qd2! 65 Qd2! 66 Qd2! 67 Qd2! 68 Qd2! 69 Qd2! 70 Qd2! 71 Qd2! 72 Qd2! 73 Qd2! 74 Qd2! 75 Qd2! 76 Qd2! 77 Qd2! 78 Qd2! 79 Qd2! 80 Qd2! 81 Qd2! 82 Qd2! 83 Qd2! 84 Qd2! 85 Qd2! 86 Qd2! 87 Qd2! 88 Qd2! 89 Qd2! 90 Qd2! 91 Qd2! 92 Qd2! 93 Qd2! 94 Qd2! 95 Qd2! 96 Qd2! 97 Qd2! 98 Qd2! 99 Qd2! 100 Qd2!

20...Rc6! 21 Rxd6 Nxd6 22 Qd4 Nd7 23 Rf1 Nd1 24 Qd2 Rf1 25 Ng5
Without a black pawn on e5, the f5-square is open for contention and White knows just the piece that he wants there.

26...Qd7 (Diagram 16) 27 e4 exd4 27...e4! also OK

Arguably Black's previous move was an overreaction, but then certainly so. We can see the importance of opening up the f file.

16 for 4

These hanging pawns can either be very weak or very strong. In this encounter it appears to be the latter case. Although the rooks pawns are targets, now the f5-bishop can see plenty of light to the end of the board.

28...Nd1 29-Qc3 Nd1 (Diagram 17) 30 Rxf5 Nd1

Expanding the exchange sacrifice, 30...g4! 31 Nd3 Kd1 32 Nd3 Qd1 33-d5 compensation. White something well.

31 Nd3!

The knight jumps into its optimal position where it also happens to defend the d4-pawn. The f5 rook is constant to capture business of Qc3+ and Qc7 mate.

31...Qc4

To help replace this move, note how 31...Nd1 32 Qc3 g4 33 Nd3

would drop the queen.



Diagram 17
The f6 file has been opened



Diagram 18
Serious pressure!

12 Bf7

Now all of White's pieces are getting in on the act.

13. Nc4 Bf7 Qg4 g4 Bf7 Nf6 (Diagram 18) 14...Kf8

15. Kg1 Bf7 Ra7 Ra7 Bf7 Kf8 Bf7 Qf4 mate would be a different end to the game

16 Ra7+ Kg1 Bf7 Nf6 Black resigns

Black suffers heavy material damage.

Case 4

□ P. Sandler ■ Kalin

WJW Jan 2000

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 a3 B-a5 5 Bb5-d6 6 cxd6 axd6 7 Ng5 Bb4 8 0-0 Bb6

As White has at least temporarily compromised his dark-squared bishop, then Black can look upon 3...Bb4 as being a job well done. Certainly there is no longer any need for him to feel obliged to trade it for a knight and as all is quiet peacefully at the white king

6...Bb7 (Diagram 19)

The jury is out on whether this is a subtle and useful developing move or a comparative waste of time. There remains as the immediate 6...c5 Bb7 Qe1 Nc3 Bf7 Qf4, but if Black's knight is better posted on e6, then perhaps Bb7 (meaning ...c7-c6 as White is yet to weaken the e6-square) is justified.

6...Nc6 16 Bf7-c6

Black isn't too worried about the prospect of an isolated d pawn given the pressure that he should be able to mount against c5. Moreover, e6-e5 is now an even tougher task for White to achieve



Diagram 18
A mating move



Diagram 19
Space-threatening pawns

21. Rcl e6! 22. Rf2! Nf6 23. Bc1! Nc6 24. Qg1!

One can't help feeling that White's last three (especially preparatory) moves are just a little slim. Black on the occasion gets on with some handy queen-side expansion.

24...b5 25. g4! b4 26. Nc4! c4 27. Bcl Bc7 28. g5! Nc6 29. f4! Bc6! (Diagram 20)

White's long-side pawns just don't look so menacing as Black's queen-side ones on the other side of the board. At a glance one can see that White's extra pawn at c4 is all right, with Black's being much stronger on c6. Indeed, now Black is threatening to win a pawn with 29...b5!

29. Rcl Bc6 30. Qg2! g6 31. h4! c5 32. Bcl Nc6?

As it happens, incredibly powerful was 29...Qc7, which amongst other things would have threatened...Rc7 with Nc6 to follow. Nevertheless, Black clearly remains on top with White's queen-side pawns in a complete mess.

34. Qf2! Qc7 35. Nc4! Bc6 36. dxc5! Nc6 37. c6!

White must attempt something to activate his queen-side pawns, but he is clearly struggling.

37...c5 38. Kc3! c4!

Opening things up when White is forced to suffer for the absence of a back-rank rook.

38. Nc4! Nc6 39. cxd4! Bc7 40. White resigns.

It's game over. Upon 39. Kc3, the crusher would be 39...Nc4!

Game 10

□ White: Tiger 12 vs. ■ Computer 4

Computer Tournament Catalogue 2000

1. e4 Nf6 2. g4 c6 3. Nc3 Nc6 4. e5 d5 5. Bc4 Bc5 6. Nf3 c5 7. B-b4 Nc6

(Diagram 21)



Diagram 21
He captures yet!



Diagram 22
Not ready to give

4.g3

White can opt to saddle Black with an isolated pawn via the unusual, yet I would still doubt Black 10-13 Bg4, but then the bishop would be misplaced on d7 (it would be taking on all when it wouldn't obstruct potential pressure against the d5 pawn).

8... Bc4 9. h3-d4-c4 10. Bc4 Qc7 11. Bc1

Central pawn exchanges would have left that bishop vulnerable, but as ...d5-d4 is a common Black plan it's fair to say that 11. Bc1 would also be a reasonable choice.

11...a4

In retrospect, Black may have preferred 11...Bd7 to try and dissuade the coming pawn advance.

12. d5 Bc8 13. e4 (Diagram 22)

Next, Black can't capture on e4 in view of 14. Qc1 when both knights would be attacked.

13...Nc7 14. Qc1 Nc8 15. Bg4 Qc7 16. g3 h4 17. e4

TIP When Black has a pawn on h4, it is always worth White at least considering the challenging e4-e5 plan.

17...h4 18. Bc1

TIP If possible to arrange, it is often desirable to block a supported passed pawn with a knight. The nature of the knight is such that it can comfortably rest there but still fulfil other useful functions too.

18...Bb6 19. Bc6 Nc4

Also, a ...Nc1-d2 manoeuvre would still be too slow when compared to White's queen-side solutions.

20. Bc7 Qc7 21. a4 (Diagram 23)





Diagram 23
Black's queen-side to castle



Diagram 24
Connected passed pawns: not

11...h4h3?

To a human? the idea may suggest although it isn't easy to suggest a constructive plan.

12. Bb2 Nf6 Bb3 e4

Now Black just has weak queen-side pawns while White has supported passed pawns and two healthy bishops.

13. Nc3 Bc4 Bb2 Bb7 14. Nc1 Nc7 15. Bc2 Bc5 Bb3 Nc4! 16. Bc3

Black has had serious positional troubles for a while and now seems like inevitable decrease loss of the c3 pawn.

17. Nc4 Bc3 Nc3 Nc4 18. Bc4 e4 19. Bf3 Qc4 20. Bc3 Bc7 21. Bg3 Bc1 24. Bb3 Bb2 25. Nc4 Bb2 26. Nc3 Bb2 27. Bc3 b4 (Diagram 24) 28. g4h4

It's always with moves like this that computers show they are not men. However, this decision will have little effect on the overall outcome of the game.

29. ...h4h3 30. Qc4h3 Qc7 31. Qc4 Bc4 32. Bb4 Bc 33. e4h3 Bc4 34. Bc4 e4 35. Bc3 Bc4 36. Bc7 e4h3+ Black resigns.

A quiet check only. Black must lose his queen to prevent mate on g7.

Game 11

□ White: 1984 Kasparov

Black: 1984 Kasparov, Rating 2675

1. d4 Nf6 2. e4 e5 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. e3 Bb7 5. Bb5 d5 6. Nf3 e4 7. 0-0 e4h4 8. e4h3 f4c4 9. Bc3 h4 10. (Diagram 25) 11. Qc2

Although Kasparov himself has no doubt been trying to, who could forget the shocking 10. Ng3 Bc7 11. Bc3 Nc4? 12. Bc1 Bb4 13. Qc2 Bc7 14. Bc3 Nc4 15. Bc4 h4h3? (11...Bc7 has been proposed as a better

(follow) 16 Qc2! Kc4 17 Qc1 Bc3 18 g3! Qc4 19 Nd3 Qd2! 20 Bc2 Bc3 21 Nd4 Bb4! 22 Nd3 Bc4 23 Qc2 Bc3 24 Nd4 Bc2 25 Qc1 Black resigns. of Kasparov, Karpov at the 1980 USSR World Championship?

19 Bc1 is the other popular alternative.



Diagram 25

The bishop will capture on b2



Diagram 26

The bishop a pawn

16... Bc1 is Bc2 Bc3

15... Bc1 is possible too but Kasparov opts to see things up here and now

16 bxc3 Qc7

This steady move lets through to the c3 pawn and opens up the game doubling ... Bc1 was another possibility

17 Bc1??

I would have thought that 15 Bc2 is preferable to this but by far the most critical continuation must be 15 Bc1! Qc6! 16 Bc2 White may be able to make a steady normal game struggle with 16 Bc2, when his bishop pair would look particularly impressive

15... Bc2!

Continuing a stabilising policy

16 Qc2!

This move would tend to suggest that 16 g3! is better. White then has more pawn islands but there is still the potential for the two bishops to get on on the side. It may also be nice to use the half open g file for attacking purposes.

16... Qc2!

Confidently locked out, Black was clearly in no need to check out the complication of 16... Ng6. As the game goes, the white queen is trapped behind enemy lines.

18 Qxa4 Nxb4 18 Qb7 Nf6 (Diagram 16)

While the white bishop looks dreadful, Black's queen and knight dominate in the center. However, although the white queen is looking at squares it is not yet doomed and White is of course the exchange up.

17 Re1 Bb6 18 Qb7 Bb4

Showing who's boss. Black could take a draw by repetition, but has something else in mind.

18 Qb7 Nf7

The immediate 19... Nc4 Qa7 Qc6 (threatening ... Rxf6) does look promising, e.g. 20 Re1 (or 20 e4) Nc4 21 Bc1 Nf6 22 B2 B2 23 Bc2 Qc4 24 Qc4 Rb4 25 Re1 26 Rb4 (ending the back rank mate threat) 27... e4 28 Qc7 Nc4. However, as White is a squably-still just in the game after 28 Qc7 (and not 28 Re1!!) both Kasparov and Ljubojević lightens the screen. After the test there is no back rank problem and the f-pawn may even have an attacking role to play.

20 Re7!

Freely concerned about the possibility of 20... Nf6, White misses Black's threat.

20... Nc4 21 Qa7 Qc6 21-Qa8

As previously mentioned, amongst other reasons, 21 Re7 Nc4 22 Rb4 Rb4 23 Rb4 Rb4 24 Rb4 doesn't work now because of 24... Rb7.

21... Nc4 22 Rb4 Nc7 White resigns (Diagram 17)**Diagram 17**

The queen rules except squares

As the only 'square' on 26 Rb4, White throws in the towel.

Chapter Three

The Rubinstein Variation

4 e3 c5

- Introduction
- White Plays 5 Nf3
- White Plays 5 Bd3
- White Plays 5 Nge2
- Illustrative Games



Introduction

1 d4 Nf3 2 e4 e5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e5-c6 (Diagram 1)



Diagram 1
Challenging the centre

Here Black gets straight to the point. With 4...c6, casting is temporarily postponed in favour of getting to grips with the centre.

Note: White is rarely tempted to capture this pawn in this sort of position as there is then a realistic chance of him being satisfied with doubled or even tripled isolated pawns.

Distancing 3...d6, White has a decision to make about the pawn on f3. It is uncertain that he wants to adopt and there is a familiar choice. His light-squared bishop could be tempted by d3 and the knight, as usual, must decide between e4 or f3. Let us take a look at some options.

White Plays 5 Nf3

1 d4 Nf3 2 e4 e5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e5-c6 5 Nf3 (Diagram 2)

Considered to be fairly common, this position can also be reached via the alternative Nimzo-Indian move order 1 Nf3 e5 2 d4 Bb4 3 Nc3.

Just one of a few playable alternatives. White has it well guarded, but Black simply develops his knight to a sensible square.

6 Bc1

NOTE: Although generally quite tempting for White, the advance d6-c6 is far from always good. The pawn will become a target on d6 and, because of the pin on the c3-knight, the supporting e4 push is not always possible. Indeed, White is frequently advised to keep his pawn structure fluid and d4-d5 may be prove really powerful later.



Diagram 3
Looking around?



Diagram 4
A rook and knight on the same square



TIP: Often the threat is greater than the execution!

Yes, the last tip is a popular place of advice. Black will always have to worry about White advancing his d-pawn, but, for the time being, see what happens to it all in this chapter's first illustrative game.

4...Be6? 7 Be4 d4

Having loaded off his dark squared bishop, Black logically looks to place pawns on dark squares in order to complement the bishop that remains.

8 e4 e5 9 d4

With the d4-pawn under pressure, ideally White retreats. Of course, it makes more sense to advance the pawn to gain more space rather than to trade pawns and end up with doubled isolated pawns.



NOTE: Doubled pawns aren't necessarily a bad thing. By definition, their presence infers at least one half-open file and often they control key squares.

9...Na7 (Diagram 5)

Plans

Although the c4-pawn is often a target – and in another situation, Black may have preferred ...Na7 with possibly ...f7-f6 and ...Bd7 to follow – it also has a positive role to play. There is little chance of Black expanding on the queenside with ...Ac8 and indeed White may choose to rather lose a pawn and the b-file to pressure his opponent. In addition, the pawn on c4 does a good job of keeping enemy knights out of what would otherwise be an excellent outpost on d4. Other typical plans for White to try and make progress include turning to the pawn break f2-f4 and trying to manoeuvre a knight to f3. In contrast, the f4-square is an attraction for the black knights and

Black's strategy often simply involves frustrating his opponent. He has no real weaknesses and knows that most engines should be in trouble for him.

White Plays 5 Bc3

1 d4 Nf6 2 e4 e5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e3 c5 5 Bc3 Nbd7 6 Ng2

By now we know that this is a familiar feature of 4 e3, the king's knight often supports an colleague.

6... e6 7 e5 d5 8 f3 e6

As the c3-knight is protected, White often is trade pawns rather than allow the ...d5 that would distract (if only temporarily) his bishop from its most active diagonal.

8... Nc6 9 Bx6 Bx6 10-0 (Diagram 4)



Diagram 4
Marking the castled pawn

Plans

Many of the same ideas hold true as in my last discussion on the typical QQP position. The clear difference, as you can see in Diagram 4, is that there is a knight on c3 rather than f3. This means that it will travel a different path. Here, it supports e3 but then again there is a lesser grip over the d4-square. The d4-pawn will become weaker the more pawns that are traded off and a white kingside attack (possibly initiated by f3 and g4) should certainly be considered.

White Plays 5 Ng2

1 d4 Nf6 2 e4 e5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e3 c5 5 Ng2

White knows that he won't remove doubled pawns at the cost of obstructing his bishop.

2...c6! 3...c5! 4!!

My selected line here serves the purpose of introducing a new theme, *see*. However, also slightly different to anything we've seen so far is 4...c5! 5...T a6! 6! 7! 8! 9! 10! 11! 12! 13! 14! 15! 16! 17! 18! 19! 20! 21! 22! 23! 24! 25! 26! 27! 28! 29! 30! 31! 32! 33! 34! 35! 36! 37! 38! 39! 40! 41! 42! 43! 44! 45! 46! 47! 48! 49! 50! 51! 52! 53! 54! 55! 56! 57! 58! 59! 60! 61! 62! 63! 64! 65! 66! 67! 68! 69! 70! 71! 72! 73! 74! 75! 76! 77! 78! 79! 80! 81! 82! 83! 84! 85! 86! 87! 88! 89! 90! 91! 92! 93! 94! 95! 96! 97! 98! 99! 100! 101! 102! 103! 104! 105! 106! 107! 108! 109! 110! 111! 112! 113! 114! 115! 116! 117! 118! 119! 120! 121! 122! 123! 124! 125! 126! 127! 128! 129! 130! 131! 132! 133! 134! 135! 136! 137! 138! 139! 140! 141! 142! 143! 144! 145! 146! 147! 148! 149! 150! 151! 152! 153! 154! 155! 156! 157! 158! 159! 160! 161! 162! 163! 164! 165! 166! 167! 168! 169! 170! 171! 172! 173! 174! 175! 176! 177! 178! 179! 180! 181! 182! 183! 184! 185! 186! 187! 188! 189! 190! 191! 192! 193! 194! 195! 196! 197! 198! 199! 200! 201! 202! 203! 204! 205! 206! 207! 208! 209! 210! 211! 212! 213! 214! 215! 216! 217! 218! 219! 220! 221! 222! 223! 224! 225! 226! 227! 228! 229! 230! 231! 232! 233! 234! 235! 236! 237! 238! 239! 240! 241! 242! 243! 244! 245! 246! 247! 248! 249! 250! 251! 252! 253! 254! 255! 256! 257! 258! 259! 260! 261! 262! 263! 264! 265! 266! 267! 268! 269! 270! 271! 272! 273! 274! 275! 276! 277! 278! 279! 280! 281! 282! 283! 284! 285! 286! 287! 288! 289! 290! 291! 292! 293! 294! 295! 296! 297! 298! 299! 300! 301! 302! 303! 304! 305! 306! 307! 308! 309! 310! 311! 312! 313! 314! 315! 316! 317! 318! 319! 320! 321! 322! 323! 324! 325! 326! 327! 328! 329! 330! 331! 332! 333! 334! 335! 336! 337! 338! 339! 340! 341! 342! 343! 344! 345! 346! 347! 348! 349! 350! 351! 352! 353! 354! 355! 356! 357! 358! 359! 360! 361! 362! 363! 364! 365! 366! 367! 368! 369! 370! 371! 372! 373! 374! 375! 376! 377! 378! 379! 380! 381! 382! 383! 384! 385! 386! 387! 388! 389! 390! 391! 392! 393! 394! 395! 396! 397! 398! 399! 400! 401! 402! 403! 404! 405! 406! 407! 408! 409! 410! 411! 412! 413! 414! 415! 416! 417! 418! 419! 420! 421! 422! 423! 424! 425! 426! 427! 428! 429! 430! 431! 432! 433! 434! 435! 436! 437! 438! 439! 440! 441! 442! 443! 444! 445! 446! 447! 448! 449! 450! 451! 452! 453! 454! 455! 456! 457! 458! 459! 460! 461! 462! 463! 464! 465! 466! 467! 468! 469! 470! 471! 472! 473! 474! 475! 476! 477! 478! 479! 480! 481! 482! 483! 484! 485! 486! 487! 488! 489! 490! 491! 492! 493! 494! 495! 496! 497! 498! 499! 500! 501! 502! 503! 504! 505! 506! 507! 508! 509! 510! 511! 512! 513! 514! 515! 516! 517! 518! 519! 520! 521! 522! 523! 524! 525! 526! 527! 528! 529! 530! 531! 532! 533! 534! 535! 536! 537! 538! 539! 540! 541! 542! 543! 544! 545! 546! 547! 548! 549! 550! 551! 552! 553! 554! 555! 556! 557! 558! 559! 560! 561! 562! 563! 564! 565! 566! 567! 568! 569! 570! 571! 572! 573! 574! 575! 576! 577! 578! 579! 580! 581! 582! 583! 584! 585! 586! 587! 588! 589! 590! 591! 592! 593! 594! 595! 596! 597! 598! 599! 600! 601! 602! 603! 604! 605! 606! 607! 608! 609! 610! 611! 612! 613! 614! 615! 616! 617! 618! 619! 620! 621! 622! 623! 624! 625! 626! 627! 628! 629! 630! 631! 632! 633! 634! 635! 636! 637! 638! 639! 640! 641! 642! 643! 644! 645! 646! 647! 648! 649! 650! 651! 652! 653! 654! 655! 656! 657! 658! 659! 660! 661! 662! 663! 664! 665! 666! 667! 668! 669! 670! 671! 672! 673! 674! 675! 676! 677! 678! 679! 680! 681! 682! 683! 684! 685! 686! 687! 688! 689! 690! 691! 692! 693! 694! 695! 696! 697! 698! 699! 700! 701! 702! 703! 704! 705! 706! 707! 708! 709! 710! 711! 712! 713! 714! 715! 716! 717! 718! 719! 720! 721! 722! 723! 724! 725! 726! 727! 728! 729! 730! 731! 732! 733! 734! 735! 736! 737! 738! 739! 740! 741! 742! 743! 744! 745! 746! 747! 748! 749! 750! 751! 752! 753! 754! 755! 756! 757! 758! 759! 760! 761! 762! 763! 764! 765! 766! 767! 768! 769! 770! 771! 772! 773! 774! 775! 776! 777! 778! 779! 780! 781! 782! 783! 784! 785! 786! 787! 788! 789! 790! 791! 792! 793! 794! 795! 796! 797! 798! 799! 800! 801! 802! 803! 804! 805! 806! 807! 808! 809! 810! 811! 812! 813! 814! 815! 816! 817! 818! 819! 820! 821! 822! 823! 824! 825! 826! 827! 828! 829! 830! 831! 832! 833! 834! 835! 836! 837! 838! 839! 840! 841! 842! 843! 844! 845! 846! 847! 848! 849! 850! 851! 852! 853! 854! 855! 856! 857! 858! 859! 860! 861! 862! 863! 864! 865! 866! 867! 868! 869! 870! 871! 872! 873! 874! 875! 876! 877! 878! 879! 880! 881! 882! 883! 884! 885! 886! 887! 888! 889! 890! 891! 892! 893! 894! 895! 896! 897! 898! 899! 900! 901! 902! 903! 904! 905! 906! 907! 908! 909! 910! 911! 912! 913! 914! 915! 916! 917! 918! 919! 920! 921! 922! 923! 924! 925! 926! 927! 928! 929! 930! 931! 932! 933! 934! 935! 936! 937! 938! 939! 940! 941! 942! 943! 944! 945! 946! 947! 948! 949! 950! 951! 952! 953! 954! 955! 956! 957! 958! 959! 960! 961! 962! 963! 964! 965! 966! 967! 968! 969! 970! 971! 972! 973! 974! 975! 976! 977! 978! 979! 980! 981! 982! 983! 984! 985! 986! 987! 988! 989! 990! 991! 992! 993! 994! 995! 996! 997! 998! 999! 1000!

It seems a shame to help White struggle, although adding him with an isolated pawn vs. T...Black's 4...Nac3! is an acceptable alternative.

3...c6

The whole concept had to appear eventually, although to increase it is probably forced here as an NQP is definitely undesirable with the bishop longroking on f1.

3...d4 4...g4!

The f1 bishop must come out to enable White to castle and it isn't convenient to bridge the c4-length just now.

3...b4

A useful variation: Black challenges White's remaining pawns whilst also offering up...but as a possibility.

10! b4 (Diagram 5)

Diagram 5
Pawn structure imbalance

Pians

It seems as no great surprise that White wishes to support his advanced e-pawns in this manner. Indeed, 10...c6! would lead the entire line to Black as White's isolated d4-pawn would then be far more of a target than Black's equivalent a...or b-pawns.

Now an exciting middlegame begins on the board, particularly in the likely occurrence of 10...h4-h5. Counter games are always and almost vital in the opening and middlegame and Black would have two ways of doing. On the other hand, White's large queenside pawns majority would clearly hold potential too.

Illustrative Games

Game 10

(1 Move ■ Plymate)

Notes: 100)

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. e4 c5 5. Nf3 Nc6 6. d5

As I previously stated, many club players would have difficulty realizing this early advance, although in fact it is very rare at the highest levels.

8...Nc7

The pawn on d4 gains space but has also become a target. Remember that 7.e4 is obviously playable because the c7 knight is pinned.

7. d6 Nf5 (Diagram 6)



Diagram 6
Strong or weak?



Diagram 7
Symmetrical squares!

The d4 pawn has advanced further into enemy territory and could easily help in infiltrating the squares. However, Black has not had quite as much of it up.

9. Qd3

White would have preferred not to have moved his queen so soon but 8...Nc7 was a blunder.

9...Qd8

The d4 pawn is now hot tissue, thus leaving White's hand.

8.e2 Nf4

Okay, this square is an outpost but Black doesn't normally expect that knight to remain as long-term business. It does, however, fulfill the purpose of rooking all the white queen's protection of her 'out-of-a-kind' pawns.

10. Qe3

More adventurous would have been 10.e3? but after 10...Nf4 no doubt White was worried that both of those pawns might drop off.

10...Qe3 11 Nxe3 cxd4 12 Bxd4 e5 (Diagram 7) 13 e4

After 13.f3 Qe3 14 Bxf3 Bxf3 15 h4? White's doubled isolated e-pawns would soon suffer.

13...e4! 14 exf4 f4 15 Bxf4 Qxf4 16 Qe4 Nxe4 17 f4?

Black would regain the material after 17.Qxf4 Qxf4!

17...Qxf4 18 Qxf4 Qxf4 (Diagram 8)



Diagram 8
Dark pawns

Black has arranged two pawns up and the rest is fairly straightforward.

18 Nf3 e4 19 Bf4 e4 20 Bf4 e4 21 Bf4 e4 22 Bf4 e4 23 Bf4 e4 24 Bf4 e4 25 Qxf4 Qxf4 26 Qxf4 Qxf4 27 Qxf4 Qxf4 28 Qxf4 Qxf4 29 Qxf4 Qxf4 30 Qxf4 Qxf4 White resigns

Game 17

□ White ■ Ivan der Storm

Rating: 2200

1. d4 Nf6 2. e4 e5 3. Nf3 Bf4 4. e3 e4 5. Bf4 Nc6 6. Nf5 Bxc3+ 7. h4! e5 8. e4

Different to the 4. e4 e4 0-0! Nc7 in the theoretical section.

9...e5

Black, however, needs the same. The dark-squared pawns surely com-

placement his light squared bishop

8 Nc2 (Diagram 9)



Diagram 9
Preparing f3-f4



Diagram 10
An ordinary check



NOTE: It is a common theme in this so-called 'Nimzo variation' for White to allow Black to attack d4 more times than it is defended. The logic is that White is happy to clear off more pawns (even at the cost of losing one) as it leaves the second tier for his bishops to operate. In contrast, Black prefers a more blocked pawn structure where his knights can rule the day.

White paves the way to introduce his f-pawn into the equation. 8 Nf3, also with an idea of hopping later on, is also possible.

8...d4 10 Bf3 Qc7?

Played as an alternative to 10...Qc7, which would instead offer its weight to...c4-c4. Nevertheless, Black has a reason for his selection.

11 h3

White would love to open up the position for his bishop pair and even if it is being the perfect break. However, even he feels the need to remove the possibility of...Ng4. As it transpires, though, there is a downside in the form of the hole now created on g2.

11...h5

Following textbook policy, Black continues to place pawns on the opposite colour to his remaining bishop. This further bolsters the d4 pawn, moves the pawn out of any potential trouble from the h1 rook and offers up...f4 for the future.

12 f4

Getting straight to the point, although in view of the game restrictions, possibly 12 Nc4 would have been more prudent.

12...a6 13 e4 13...e4 14 e4 14...f4

Stronger than the mainline 14...Nxd4 when, bearing in mind a future Nc3, 15 Nc4 could be rather dangerous.

15 Nc4??

The white king attempts to-tuck itself out of harm's way but only succeeds in walking into more trouble!

15...Nxd4 16 Nc3 16!!

A key move that effectively seals White's fate

17 Bc3 Nc3 18 Bc4 Nc4+ 19 Rg1 Qc3+ (Diagram 14)

The queen squares right on eye

20 Nc3 Nc3+ 21 Nc2 g4!!

Finally Black takes the baiting, leaving himself plenty of material up

22 Ng1 Nc2 23 Nc3 Qc3 24 Qc2 Bc3 25 Rf2 Rg2 26 Qc3 Rg3

White resigns

Game 14

□ Rukhman 14 16!!

Anti/Queen Lines 20!!

1...d4 2...Nc3 3...c4 4...Nc4 5...c4 6...d4

Actually 4...c4 rather than 4...d4, but this game is more relevant to this chapter than the last.

6...Bc3 7...d4 8...Ng2 Nc3

Not as popular as 6...cxd4 7...cxd4 8...c4 or indeed the somewhat 6...c4, neither of which contain the queen's knight.

7...c4 d4

8...cxd4 9...cxd4-d4 is more like the main line with White generally choosing between 9...Rg1, 9...c3 and 9...c4

9...cxd4 cxd4 10...c3 Bc3 11...c4 Bc3 12...d4 (Diagram 15)



Diagram 11
Forces in the center



Diagram 12
Light on c3!!

White has the bishop pair and a capacity for a big pawn centre. Black has a free enough position but would do well to keep the enemy dark squared bishop out of the action.

12. Kd2

TIP: White players should keep an eye out for this useful move as it is often the best way to activate the queen's rook.

12...Nc7 13.g4!

Looks to get in attack. White opts to expand on the kingside.

13...c7!

Facilitating Black's next move, but making it his bishop and taking the pressure off the centre. As yet he has no targets on the kingside and so a less tactical move like 13...Qd8 might be more prudent.

WARNING! Be very sure before taking the pressure off the centre.

14.Bh3 Nc6 15.Ng2 Nc6 16.g5 Nd7 17.e4

Compared to White's centre, Black's centre pines on. The e4-square is unlikely to have a big impact for some time.

17...Nc6 18.Qc2 19.f4 20.e4 (Diagram 13)

The pawns, nicely placed on dark squares, beautifully complement the light squared bishop. Now the e, f and g pawns look very dangerous and there are other problems besides.

NOTE: Bishops are long-range pieces. It may not be f1 but White's light-squared bishop has a big influence elsewhere.

20...e4 21.Nc4 Qc4 22.Nd6!

This 'square-in-the-middle' move was looking distinctly on the cards.

22...g4 23.g4!

Now Qc4 and Qd6 will both be mating. Also forcing Black's response.

23...Kc6 24.Qc4 Rg6 25.Kd1 Nf6 26.Rg1 (Diagram 14)



Diagram 13
White to move!

Calving in the cavalry. After a trade of rooks, white will move at g7

15...Ng3 16 Rg1 Black resigns

Out! As well as 27 Bb5, White threatens the queen via 27 Qd6!

Game 15

□ WhitePlayer ■ Johnstone

Russian Team Championship, Ques 2001

1 d4 Nf6 2 e4 e5 3 Nc3 Bb4+ 4 e3 b4

Specially at b4, but with a transposition clearly possible I have chosen to include it here.

4 Ngf3-cf4 5 e3 Bb7 7 Bb4 (Diagram 14)



Diagram 14
Castling the Bishop!



Diagram 15
A ring in the air

The bishop on c1 is generally placed, with b2-b4 a perpetual threat to be guarded against.

7...Qc7 8 Nd2 Bb7

8...Nd7 is more common as it further restricts the b4 square. Nevertheless, Black's dynamic choice asks questions of the c1-pawn.

9 Nf3-cf4 10 e3 Bb7 11 Bb4-d4 12 g3

13 cxd3 exd3 13 Bc2 Bc2 14 Nc3 Nd7 would leave White with a bad bishop.

14...Qc7

After 12...Bc2 13 Bc2 dxc3 White had in mind 14 b4-c5, with Black unable to prevent the advance d4-d5 then would surely improve the bishop.

13 b3 Bb7 14 Rg1 dxc3?

A curious move which nevertheless proves very instructive for us. Better was the solid 14...Qc7.

Starting Out: The White-Indian

19...d4!

The opening of the long diagonal is possible for Black. Now casting India is too dangerous.

19...e6!?? 20. Bc6 g6! 21. Nc4 Qd8 22. e4

In contrast to its wrong number, the white king is now safely tucked away.

19...Nc4

No better was 19...Nc7 19...d4! Qc4! 20. Bc6! Nc4 21. Bc7! Nc7! 22. Bc7 + g 23...Nc4 23...Nc4! Kc6 24. Bc7! mate

19...Nc4! Kc7 20. Qd4! e6 21. Qd4 (Diagram 18)

QUESTION: a. Black now didn't take the bait, but why not?

19...Kc6 20. Bc6! Kc7

A desperate attempt to escape with the king

20...Nc4 Qc4! 21. Bc6!

Very nice! Now the queen is forced to leave the e6-pawn unprotected.

21...Qc4! 22. Qc7! + Qd7 23. Qc6!

23. Kc7! Nc4 27. Qc6! + Kc6 28. Nc4! h4! 29. Qc6! was a simpler way to win, but White gets there in the end.

26... Kc6 27. Qc6! Kc7 24. Qc6! + Kc6 25. Qc6! 26. Qc6! Kc7 26. Qc6! Kc7 24. Qc6! Kc7 25. Qc6! Kc7 26. Qc6! Kc7 27. Nc4! Nc4! Nc4! 28. Bc6! Bc6! 29. Qc6! Kc7 30. Qc6! Kc7 31. Bc6! Qc6! 32. Qc7! Kc6 33. Bc6! Kc6 34. Bc6! Kc6 35. Bc6! Kc6 36. Bc6! Kc6 37. Bc6! Kc6 38. Bc6! Kc6 39. Bc6! Kc6 40. Bc6! Kc6 41. Bc6! Kc6 42. Bc6! Kc6 43. Bc6! Kc6 44. Bc6! Kc6 45. Bc6! Kc6 46. Bc6! Kc6 47. Bc6! Kc6 48. Bc6! Kc6 49. Bc6! Kc6 50. Bc6! Kc6 51. Bc6! Kc6 52. Bc6! Kc6 53. Bc6! Kc6 54. Bc6! Kc6 55. Bc6! Kc6 56. Bc6! Kc6 57. Bc6! Kc6 58. Bc6! Kc6 59. Bc6! Kc6 60. Bc6! Kc6 61. Bc6! Kc6 62. Bc6! Kc6 63. Bc6! Kc6 64. Bc6! Kc6 65. Bc6! Kc6 66. Bc6! Kc6 67. Bc6! Kc6 68. Bc6! Kc6 69. Bc6! Kc6 70. Bc6! Kc6 71. Bc6! Kc6 72. Bc6! Kc6 73. Bc6! Kc6 74. Bc6! Kc6 75. Bc6! Kc6 76. Bc6! Kc6 77. Bc6! Kc6 78. Bc6! Kc6 79. Bc6! Kc6 80. Bc6! Kc6 81. Bc6! Kc6 82. Bc6! Kc6 83. Bc6! Kc6 84. Bc6! Kc6 85. Bc6! Kc6 86. Bc6! Kc6 87. Bc6! Kc6 88. Bc6! Kc6 89. Bc6! Kc6 90. Bc6! Kc6 91. Bc6! Kc6 92. Bc6! Kc6 93. Bc6! Kc6 94. Bc6! Kc6 95. Bc6! Kc6 96. Bc6! Kc6 97. Bc6! Kc6 98. Bc6! Kc6 99. Bc6! Kc6 100. Bc6! Kc6

Chapter Four

The Classical Variation

4 Qc2 d5

- Introduction
- White Plays 5 a3
- White Plays 5 cxd5
- Illustrative Games



Introduction

1...d4 Nf3 2...e5 3...Nc6 4...Bc4 (Diagram 1)



Diagram 1
A normal move



Diagram 2
Resolving a QOO

The Classical Variation has become very popular in recent years as White aims to obtain a slight plus via the occupation of the bishop pair advantage without doubled pawns.

TIP: Don't bring your queen out too early.

Move 4 is a standard opening try that is generally aimed at preventing such a valuable game being locked down, either to pass when the rest of the army should be getting developed instead. However, the c4 square is hardly a reliable square for the white queen and, having higher short-term solutions for her dark squared bishop, this is preferred as a Bc4.

Black's three main replies are covered over the next three chapters starting with

1...d4 Nf3 2...e5 3...Nc6 4...Bc4

Black observes that White might be being crafty and in controlling the key square e4, prevents his opponent from obtaining central dominance through f4-f5. Bearing this in mind and taking a slight detour, it should be observed that 4...Nf7 is almost a case of strengthening the game after the horse has landed. Unlike in the 4...Nf6 line, Black's bishop won't arrive on f7 in time to prevent the immediate advance and indeed, with f4-f5 possibly following, it could well find itself frustrated against a wall of pawns.

Diagram 2 shows definite similarities with the Queen's Gambit. Do check. The fundamental difference is that White would normally give preference to developing a knight or bishop rather than the queen and, not usually interested in a bishop for knight exchange (as



WANG ET AL. the nimzo-indian

Read for those wanting to understand the tactics of the Nimzo-Indian.

The Nimzo-Indian is one of the most used and most popular defenses against 1.e4, offering Black the chance to outplay the game early on and win for a side without a king cast. Advanced players already all of the world's top players, including Garry Kasparov, Vladimir Kramnik, Sergey Karjakin and Anand Nepomnielashvili. In this revolutionary book, Grandmaster Gata Korišnik explains the basic principles behind the Nimzo-Indian and its many variations. Throughout this easy-to-read guide the reader is helped along by a wealth of tactics, tips and insights from GM Korišnik, with key strategies, ideas and motifs for both sides are clearly illustrated.

- ✔ Written by a world renowned chess player
- ✔ All the important variations are covered
- ✔ A book for both sides of one of the most important openings

Gata Korišnik is a Grandmaster and a former World Champion. He is also a highly successful coach and a well respected writer. His earlier works for Everyman include *Against Your Opponent's King* and *The Best of Chess*. It's that time.

